

students during a class trip to Washington, DC. During the trip she met an old college friend who told her about a job opening in the Senate Document Room. While her students were touring the Capitol, Kathie interviewed and was hired on the spot. Unfortunately for those students, they lost a great teacher that day, but it turned out to be a gain for the Senate.

In 1985 Kathie was hired as the second assistant bill clerk and was quickly promoted to assistant bill clerk.

In 1991, for the first time, Senators came to this Chamber and heard a woman's voice taking the rollcall vote. It was Kathie Alvarez, the first female bill clerk of the United States Senate. What an achievement.

Before the end of the millennium, Kathie Alvarez was a part of another first when she was 1 of 10 officers—all women—presiding over the Senate at the start of the day. If that were not enough, Kathie once again made history when she was promoted to legislative clerk in 2009. She was the first woman to serve in this role too. What a career.

In 1922, for the history books, Rebecca Latimer Felton was the first woman to sit in the Senate. She served in this body for only 1 day, but during those 24 hours she made a bold prediction for her time about the future role women would play in the Senate. She said:

When the women of the country come in and sit with you . . . you will get ability, you will get integrity of purpose, you will get exalted patriotism, and you will get unstinted usefulness.

Well, I will certainly second that.

As the first woman to serve as the bill clerk and legislative clerk of the United States Senate, I would say Kathie Alvarez has certainly lived up to Senator Felton's prediction. She began her career as a seventh grade history teacher and came to the Senate, where she made history.

Thank you for your service to this body. I know you will be joining your husband John and your high school student daughter Georgia in a much more fulsome way now, but we will miss you in the Senate, and I wish you and your family the very best.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I wish to say a word about a remarkable woman in the Senate we will soon be losing.

Kathie Alvarez, the Senate's legislative clerk, is a bit of a celebrity. Every C-SPAN aficionado knows her voice. All she has to say is "Mr. ALEXANDER, Ms. AYOTTE . . ." and it is instantly recognizable.

Kathie has been calling the roll around here for quite a while. In 1991, she became the first woman to ever call the roll in the Senate. In 1999, with Senator COLLINS in the chair, Kathie became a member of the first all-female team to preside over this body, and in 2009 she became the Senate's first female legislative clerk.

So Kathie Alvarez has been making a lot of history since she first arrived here in 1984.

And you will notice, Madam President, that every female floor staffer is paying tribute to her today. They are each wearing something with Kathie's favorite design—animal print.

Along with the love of Cajun food, sartorial distinction is one thing this Louisianan has become known for, a passion for perfection is another.

Kathie has maintained a laser-like focus for three decades. That is good news for the Senate because we rely on her—and the American people rely on her—to ensure that every bill, every amendment, and every message from the House is processed perfectly. That is a lot of pressure.

So we can't blame Kathie for wanting to retire. I know she is looking forward to spending more time with her husband John, and I know Kathie wants to see more of her daughter Georgia.

It will not be as though Kathie is leaving us entirely. We will still be able to hear her voice on the film every tourist watches when they come to visit the Capitol.

So the Senate thanks Kathie Alvarez, its history-making celebrity, for her many years of service, and we wish the very best to her deputy, John Merlino, as he steps into Kathie's role as the Senate's new legislative clerk.

(Applause, Senators rising.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Ashton B. Carter, of Massachusetts, to be Secretary of Defense?

Mr. INHOFE. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Nevada (Mr. REID) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HOEVEN). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 93, nays 5, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 56 Ex.]

YEAS—93

Alexander	Boxer	Casey
Ayotte	Brown	Cassidy
Baldwin	Burr	Coats
Barrasso	Cantwell	Cochran
Bennet	Capito	Collins
Blumenthal	Cardin	Coons
Booker	Carper	Corker

Cornyn	Johnson	Roberts
Cotton	Kaine	Rounds
Cruz	King	Rubio
Daines	Klobuchar	Sanders
Donnelly	Lankford	Sasse
Durbin	Leahy	Schatz
Enzi	Lee	Schumer
Ernst	Manchin	Scott
Feinstein	Markey	Sessions
Fischer	McCain	Shaheen
Flake	McCaskill	Shelby
Franken	McConnell	Stabenow
Gardner	Menendez	Sullivan
Gillibrand	Merkley	Tester
Graham	Mikulski	Thune
Grassley	Murkowski	Tillis
Hatch	Murphy	Toomey
Heinrich	Murray	Udall
Heitkamp	Nelson	Vitter
Heller	Paul	Warner
Hirono	Perdue	Warren
Hoeben	Peters	Whitehouse
Inhofe	Portman	Wicker
Isakson	Reed	Wyden

NAYS—5

Blunt	Crapo	Risch
Boozman	Kirk	

NOT VOTING—2

Moran	Reid
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The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume legislative session.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2015—MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUESTS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, for 2 weeks now Democrats have continued to filibuster funding for the Department of Homeland Security.

They are filibustering Homeland Security for one reason, and that is to defend actions President Obama himself referred to as "unwise and unfair" and "ignoring the law."

For 2 full weeks, Democrats have prevented the Senate from even considering legislation to fund the Department of Homeland Security. Democrats won't allow the Senate to even debate this funding. Democrats won't allow the Senate to even consider amendments to this funding.

Democrats appear willing to do anything and everything they can to prevent the Senate from taking any action to fund Homeland Security, and all to defend "unwise and unfair"—the President's words, not mine—overreach.

This includes Democrats who claim to be against overreach and who claim to be for funding the Department of Homeland Security. Yet these Democrats continue to filibuster things they claim to want.

Listen to the things Democrats have been saying too. We have heard a claim

from them the Democratic filibuster wasn't actually a filibuster. We heard a call from them for the Senate to start with funding legislation of its own. Of course, the Democratic leader has been clear in the past that the Senate can do no such thing.

Well, here is some good news. There is already a funding bill before us. It has already passed the House. It would fund the Department of Homeland Security fully, and we can consider it today, right now. All Democrats have to do is stop blocking the Senate from even debating it. If our Democratic colleagues don't like provisions of the bill the House has passed, the Senate has a process for modifying bills. It is called amending them. But the Senate can only consider amendments to a bill if it is not being filibustered.

This strained logic of our Democratic friends is very hard to swallow. We understand Democrats might be having a tough time kicking this years-long gridlock habit of theirs, but it is about time they did.

I have already offered a fair and open debate to them several times now. It is a debate that would allow amendments from both parties—that means amendments from our Democratic friends as well. If you want to make changes to the bill, colleagues, that is the way to do it. But to do so you first need to end the weeks-long Democratic filibuster of Homeland Security funding.

Why don't we get serious instead and let the Senate fund the Department of Homeland Security.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the motion to proceed to H.R. 240 be agreed to, and that it be made in order for the managers or their designees to offer amendments in an alternating fashion, with the majority manager or his designee being recognized to offer the first amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. DURBIN. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The acting minority leader.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I don't understand why the Republicans in the House and the Senate have decided to hold up one appropriations bill of our Federal Government, the appropriations for the Department of Homeland Security, the one agency that is supposed to protect us against terrorism.

Last December, the House Republicans said: We are just not going to give regular funding to this Department—\$48 billion this Department spends on the Coast Guard, border security, and a myriad of different things to keep America safe—but the Republicans said this is one agency we are not going to fully fund. We will put them on temporary funding, called a continuing resolution, and we will get back to you on February 27.

Then what they did is to lash the budget of this Department to the thorny, difficult issue of immigration and insist that we can't fund the De-

partment of Homeland Security unless we take up what I consider to be some rather outrageous riders put on by the House of Representatives on the issue of immigration.

The good news is we have come up with a solution on this side. I am going to make it in the manner of a unanimous consent request, and it is very straightforward.

First, because Senator JEANNE SHAHEEN from New Hampshire has stepped forward and offered, with Senator MIKULSKI, S. 272, we have a clean appropriations bill for the Department of Homeland Security.

If the Senator would like me to yield for a question, I will yield at this point.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. If I could ask my colleague a question, isn't it true, I say to Senator DURBIN, that the bill you are talking about, the clean bill Senator MIKULSKI and I have introduced, is the legislation that was agreed to last December by Senator MIKULSKI, when she was chair of the Appropriations Committee, and HAL ROGERS, chair of the House Appropriations Committee? It was a bipartisan agreement, a bicameral agreement, and each side gave some.

What is at issue here is not that underlying bill. What is at issue are the five riders, the amendments the House put on, that have nothing to do with funding the Department of Homeland Security.

Mr. DURBIN. I would answer in the affirmative. That is why the unanimous consent request I am going to make is the easiest, quickest solution to our problem—a clean, bipartisan appropriations bill for the Department of Homeland Security. But we are not running away from the immigration issue. Because Senator MCCONNELL is now the majority leader and controls the business of the Senate and Speaker BOEHNER controls the business of the House, they can take up the immigration issue immediately after we have funded this Department.

So what I am going to suggest in my unanimous consent request is that they use their power in the majority to take us to this important debate on immigration after we have given a clean appropriation to the one Federal agency empowered with keeping America safe from terrorism.

Let's not play politics with terrorism. Let's not play politics with the budget of the Department of Homeland Security.

Therefore, I ask unanimous consent that following the enactment of the text of S. 272, the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act for fiscal year 2015, at a time to be determined by the majority leader, after consultation with the Democratic leader but no later than Monday, March 16, the Senate proceed to the consideration of the Border Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Mod-

ernization Act, as passed by the Senate by a vote of 68 to 32 on June 27, 2013, the text of which is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. MCCONNELL. What is the pending business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion to proceed to H.R. 240.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to H.R. 240, making appropriations for the Department of Homeland Security for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015.

Mitch McConnell, John Cornyn, Thad Cochran, Tom Cotton, Roger F. Wicker, David Vitter, Jerry Moran, Daniel Coats, Michael B. Enzi, Mike Crapo, Bill Cassidy, John Boozman, John Thune, Tim Scott, John Hoeven, James Lankford, Jeff Sessions.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

(The remarks of Mr. CORNYN pertaining to the submission of S. Res. 76 are printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Minnesota.

(The remarks of Ms. KLOBUCHAR pertaining to the introduction of S. 491 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 20 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SOCIAL SECURITY DISABILITY INSURANCE PROGRAM

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, yesterday the Budget Committee, of which I am the ranking member, held a very important hearing on the Social Security Disability Insurance Program,